Psychiatric Study: Addled Week in an Addled Congress, Pages 2 and 3

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Did Dulles Tell The Truth On Indo-China?

The drift toward war is taking on momentum. The straw at which the hopeful grasp is the President's statement that we will not go it alone. But only a few weeks ago he was saying that we would not intervene altogether. The Secretary of State and not Mr. Eisenhower seems to be at the helm, and Mr. Dulles is building up support for unilateral intervention if necessary. His statement to the House Foreign Affairs Committee was inflammatory and may have been unreliable. Our authority for casting doubt on his word is the curious and little noticed contradiction between what he said on Monday and what Senator Kennedy (D., Mass.) next day told the Senate. The difference between their versions of what is happening in Indo-China is crucial.

Mr. Dulles said the Chinese "are coming awfully close" to active intervention in China. He claimed to have an intelligence report which said that Chinese officers were advising the Viet Minh attackers at Dien Bien Phu and Chinese soldiers manning the radar and anti-aircraft guns. It would be interesting to know whether the Pentagon considers this report reliable, and whether the source is our own intelligence or Chiang Kai-shek's. Obviously Kennedy, who is remarkably well informed on Indo-China, does not believe this because he told the Senate next day, "I think the Senate should know whether the call by the United States for united action is due to the fact that the Vietminh forces are perhaps now stronger than the Vietnam forces, or whether it is due to the extent of the Chinese assistance to the Vietminh."

Kennedy Disagrees With Dulles

If Secretary Dulles is to be believed, the strength of the Vietminh is due to greater Chinese assistance. Senator Kennedy disagreed. "I believe," he told the Senate, "it is the former. I believe it is because the forces of the Vietminh have become so powerful that they are pressing hard on the French, *and therefore it is to assist in a civil war that the call for united action has been made.*" This power, as was noted in the Senate debate, is a power of spirit and not of numbers. Senator Mansfield (D., Ohio), who also knows Indo-China at first hand, pointed out that the rebels are winning though outnumbered almost two to one; they have 291,000 men, as against the 591,000 men marshalled by the French.

Senator Kennedy's reply to this was a grave warning few if any papers reported. These were his words. "If the United States intervenes," he said, "in order to save the present situation, prior to a massive intervention by the Chinese from the North—and it appears that such intervention may be necessary on the present basis because the Vietminh seem to be winning—the Chinese will send in additional manpower, and our intervention would be useless."

The choice would then be between another bloody repetition of the Korean struggle or "massive retaliation" against China, the open door to World War III. Yet aside from Stennis (D., Miss.) and Dirksen (R., Ill.) there were no voices raised against intervention. The Democrats are if anything more ready to line up for it than the Republicans, except for Knowland (R., Cal.) and the other China Lobby Senators. The only newspaper of importance which has spoken up against intervention is the *Chicago Tribune.*

Bi-Partisanship for Repression, Too

The gravity of the international situation is matched by that of the domestic. No one who heard the President speak last Monday night and the McCarthy answer to Murrow Wednesday night could fail to be struck by the contrast between the well-meaning but intellectually feeble weakling who is President and the evil genius who is struggling to wrest from him control of the party and the country. The synthetic soft-soap of Mr. Eisenhower's well-drilled recitation is a poor substitute for leadership. While he somewhat disparaged talk of a Red menace at home his Attorney General was preparing a quite different sort of speech and is rushing through Congress a program of repressive legislation which must endanger every citizen who has ever been active in social protest or reform. The celerity with which the House moved toward passage of the wire-tap bill is indicative. The Republicans are out to make a record of "anti-Communist" legislation and the Democratic leadership is as anxious to be "bipartisan" for repression as for war.

The developing atmosphere is conducive to the panic and paranoia on which McCarthy fattens. Had it not been for a question by Miss May Craig of the Guy Gannett newspapers and the quick reaction of the Boston press, his own adherent, Sears, might have been chosen to investigate his row with the Army. A reactionary lawyer from Tennessee has been substituted, but McCarthy himself is off to fresh fields and pastures new, as in his extraordinarily mendacious charge of an 18-month delay on the H bomb. This seems to be a lie made up out of whole cloth, like his assertion that Murrow was once a Wobbly; its audacity is breath-taking. This ill-shaven man with the veiled eyes is on his way to fresh triumphs; the possibility of his some day coming to power must be taken very seriously; the hierarchy of the Catholic Church, as indicated by Cardinal Spellman's approving presence at his address to the New York police Holy Name Society, is more openly lining up behind this unscrupulous adventurer. Besprinkled with a little holy water, he may be an American Franco, another devoted son of the Church, ready to make America unsafe for heretics.

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Is There A Psychiatrist in the House? . . .

EISENHOWER IS NOT NECESSARILY TO BE CLASSED AS A FELLOW TRAVELLER, but the Communists may have taken over. This is the considered opinion of no less an authority than the ever vigilant Senator McCarran, famous from here to Madrid. Just a few hours before the President went on TV and radio last Monday night in his effort to allay fear, the Nevadan rose in the Senate with alarming news. He began by calling attention to testimony given earlier this year by J. Edgar Hoover. The FBI chief said Communist activity in this country during the past year had four main objectives —a settlement in Korea, the recall of American troops from abroad, a five power peace pact to include Red China and the resumption of East-West trade. McCarran called the Senate's attention to the fact that these are all on their way to being attained. He said a settlement was in sight in Korea, that our troops were being withdrawn, and that East-West trade was picking up. As for the Geneva conference, Senator McCarran said, "whether a five power pact, including Communist China, comes out of that meeting remains to be seen" but he added, "I would not bet a plugged nickel against it." Those were strong words for a Senator from Nevada, where betting begins in the cradle.

Unlike some of his Republican colleagues, this firm Democrat refrained from accusation. "I do not mean to say," he told the Senate, "that everything which has been done in furtherance of any one of these four Communist objectives has necessarily been done for Communist purposes . . . Nor do I say that the fact that certain Communist objectives appear to have been attained in this country, or to be well on the way towards attainment, means that the Communists are running the country. I have simply wanted to point out certain facts which the people of this Nation may wish to take into account in drawing their own conclusions . . ." The conclusion seems to be that a vote for the G.O.P. is a vote for Moscow.

SO SUBTLE ARE THE DANGERS ABOUT US that even Senator McCarran may have fallen into a trap. The government has been busily engaged for months in proving that the Communists are plotting so steadfastly for its overthrow by force and violence as to constitute a clear and present danger. A dozen Smith Act cases are in various stages of prosecution. The head of the FBI chose this moment to advise that the main objectives of the Communists are world peace and greater trade. Naturally Mr. Hoover speaks, or claims to speak, as an anti-Communist but how damaging if his testimony turns up to confute the government in Smith Act trials? Any lesser holdover from the Democrats would be subpoenaed to explain himself.

THE SPREAD OF COMMUNISM UNDER THE GOP was also noticed by sharp eyes in the House. During the debate on the Eisenhower public housing program, two Democrats rose to warn their Republican colleagues and the nation. Mr. Colmer of Mississippi found it "unbelievable" that so many Republicans were prepared to vote for public housing. "It is my considered judgment," he told the House on April 2, "that this so called public housing is the most inimicable (sic) to the continuation of the Republic. It strikes at the very bulwark of the Republic. It is un-American. It is socialistic in the truest sense of the word." Mr. Colmer said, "down in my country" when a man's eight hours of work are over "he goes home and with his own hands and often with the assistance of his wife, builds himself a modest home out of his savings." Mr. Colmer said the notion that "the Federal government owes it to any minority group of normal people to furnish them housing" could "in the end only destroy our system of government."

Mr. Dies of Texas rose to say that advocates of public housing "believe that the end justifies the means." He told of how hard he had fought such ideas under Franklin D. Roosevelt. "I remember one night," Dies said of those parlous times, "I could not sleep. I just broke out in sweat." And now, under a Republican President, he found himself bathed in perspiration again. "The people elected you," Dies reminded his Republican colleagues, "because they believed that you believed in private enterprise . . . But now the President of the United States has recommended public housing and you are confronted with a very, very unpleasant situation . . ." Mr. Dies said he despised the man who voted against his convictions on the excuse of party loyalty. "There is no dishonesty," Mr. Dies said, "worse than intellectual dishonesty." The Republicans, stung by such words, rallied against their own President's housing program. The crypto-Communism of the White House was defeated. But it was a close call. Mr. Colmer recalled that last year when the House killed off the public housing program, only 23 of the more than 200 Republicans in the House voted for public housing. This year, however, despite the appeals of Messrs. Colmer and Dies, 51 of the 201 Republicans in the House went on record for a four year program. It was defeated, but twice as many Republicans as last year were for public housing. Thus does Marxism slowly engulf the Grand Old Party.

THE DEMOCRATS, THOUGH STILL TAINTED BY NEW DEALISM (there were 124 Democrats for and only 61 Democrats against public housing), proved their loyalty in a brilliant taetical maneuver. The minority leader, McCormack of Massachusetts, offered an amendment which showed how careless or indifferent the Administration is to ideological purity in housing, else this provision would already have been in the bill. The McCormack amendment provides that no Federal agency shall make "any loan, grant, annual contribution, advance or other financial assistance" to housing of any kind, public or private, unless the owner or buyer obligates himself not to allow anyone to occupy the housing until "the prospective occupant or purchaser" has supplied a certificate that he is not (presently) a member of any organization listed by the Attorney General as subversive. The maximum penalty for false statement would be ten years in jail and $5,000 fine. This provision, if accepted by the Senate, will be an endless headache, requiring loyalty investigations for all kinds of housing and mortgage transactions. One member, a Mr. Hugh D. Scott, a Representative from Philadelphia, though a Republican, was irreverent enough to interrupt Mr. McCormack with a snide question. "I am curious," Mr. Scott said, "to know how much this overall brain washing will cost the Federal government." (Mr. Scott, as might have been expected, was one of those Eisenhower Republicans who later voted for public housing). The question was brushed aside and this patriotic amendment adopted without debate or roll call, but not without an egalitarian twist worthy of the great party of Jefferson and Jackson:

Mr. HAYS of Ohio. As I understand it, the gentleman's amendment applies to Communists all up and down the economic scale, not just to those at the bottom of it.

Mr. McCORMACK. It applies to all of them. A Communist is a Communist whether he has not got a nickel or has a million dollars.

NOBODY TO THE LEFT OF CARDINAL SPELLMAN seems entirely free nowadays from a kind of political anxiety which impels him to prove that he is not a Communist. The Republicans began a real push last week for the passage of a series of repressive measures which they can cite when and if accused of coddling, harboring or furthering Communism. But Mr. McCormack again beat them to it. Bright and early Monday morning, when a House Judiciary subcommittee opened hearings on 11 bills (no less) to outlaw the Communist party, there was the minority leader in the witness chair, from which he could not politely be removed until he had put himself on record in favor of them. The rotund bald and bespectacled chairman, Mr. Graham of Pennsylvania,

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. . . An Addled Week In Our Addled Congress

was considerably annoyed when Mr. McCormack slipped into a stump speech on the evils of Communism before a single Republican could say Karl Marx. Mr. McCormack testified that he had been trying to outlaw Communists as far back as 1934. "As you remember," Mr. McCormack reminisced, "the activities of a gentleman named Hitler were very prominent in those years. Hiding behind them were the activities of atheistic communism." In a passage which would have delighted Cotton Mather, Mr. McCormack warned of the Communists, "We are not dealing with ordinary human beings." It was a little disappointing that he did not bring with him any stereopticon slides showing Elizabeth Gurley Flynn flying over Foley Square on a broomstick during the last full moon.

A SUBVERSIVE NAMED NORMAN THOMAS appearing on behalf of the notorious Americain Civil Liberties Union followed Mr. McCormack on the witness stand and tried hard, but without success, to confuse the committee. Mr. Thomas said he had been fighting Communism long before that became fashionable, but urged the committee not to outlaw the Communist party. He said that while the Communist movement is "indeed conspiratorial," outlawry would merely eliminate "that part of the communist movement which holds conventions, adopts platforms, nominates or endorses candidates, is engaged in a legitimate and essential feature of our democratic way of life." Thomas said that in the Fort Monmouth inquiry one scientific worker had been suspended because he had been a member of the Young People's Socialist League between 1936 and 1939. "In view of such circumstances as these," Thomas declared, with a flash of his old-time fire, "I should expect our reactionaries and neo-fascists to do their utmost to stretch a bill outlawing the Communist party into the outlawry of any party which might believe that water-power belongs to the nation and should not be turned over to private utility companies."

The committee members sat there with the furrowed brows of men confronting a profound problem. But they could not understand how the witness could brand the Communist party as bad and yet plead for its right to live. It was obvious from their questions that Jefferson has been dead a long time. If a man was a burglar, one committee member suggested, should he not be outlawed? Thomas objected to "oversimplified analogies in dealing with complex problems." If a man committed burglary, he countered, arrest him for burglary, but do not pass a law forbidding him to be good to his mother. This was another reference to the legitimate activities of the Communist party, but some committee members seemed startled at the thought that a man could be a Communist and still be good to his mother. Thomas had objected in the course of his testimony to those ads which show Communism and Socialism as two twins, but by the time he had finished it was clear that most committee members felt that Thomas was just like that with the Kremlin.

ONE BIT OF THAT TESTIMONY should have disturbed them. Communism's oldest political antagonist in this country said that he could testify "from my own personal contacts that within recent months there is not more but less understanding of the real evils of communism in the United States, not less but more sympathy with it." Thomas predicted, "The outlawry of the party will strengthen this movement of sympathy among thousands of persons who doubtless will not voice it openly, but whose secret sympathy would, nonetheless, be hurtful to the growth of sound understanding of communism and its threat to freedom."

To most committee members this probably made it seem all the more urgent to pass a law punishing Communism; intellectually the Congress of the United States seems to be full of Romanoffs. The bills would make that task easy; they would enable the government to send people to jail not only for mere ideas but on suspicion that they had the wrong ones. In a time when charges of communism are made as loosely as they are today, the dangers should be obvious.

One bill would make it a crime to collaborate with an "adherent" of a foreign nation to "weaken" the government of the United States and Thomas wanted to know what happened if he had a talk with the French Ambassador and then made a statement opposing EDC. Would he be guilty of a crime? Had there been a roll call, there would have been a majority for conviction.

IT WAS A BAD WEEK FOR HAROLD LASKI. Tuesday morning there was a tantalizing item on the ticker. The Jenner committee (of which Mr. Thomas' colleagues on the ACLU executive think so highly) was about to interrogate Jonathan Mitchell, once on the New Republic and New York World, about Harry Dexter White and Henry Morgenthau. It looked like hot stuff coming up. What came up was this: In 1939 Mitchell wrote some speeches for Morgenthau on the need for venture capital. The speeches were not delivered. In 1944 Mitchell went to the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton where he stayed for four years. There he heard that White had undue influence over Morgenthau and began to suspect that maybe White's influence had blocked those speeches. In 1945 he arranged to have lunch with White. The speeches were not discussed, but Laski's *Faith, Reason and Civilization* was. Mitchell said White became overwrought and tried to hit him when Mitchell spoke disparagingly of the book. Charles Grimes, the Jenner committee's new Deweyite counsel, depicted the Laski book in cross-examination as a work which held that capitalism and Christianity were dying faiths, to be replaced by Bolshevism (a jazzed up version which would make Laski turn over in his grave). Mitchell was led on to the question: Had not White by his attitude toward the book shown 100 percent acceptance of communism? The witness said the word communism had never figured in the conversation. This was a disappointing denouement to this inquiry ten years later into one dead man's remarks about another dead man's books.

Thereupon while Mitchell sat there looking more and more uncomfortable the committee's research director, Benjamin Mandel, once business manager of the *Daily Worker*, read a collection of thrice used "documents" into the record. There were selections from Hull's memoirs saying that White had been "emotionally upset" by Hitler's persecution of the Jews and had authored the Morgenthau plan to cripple Germany. The Jenner committee was back on a favorite theme: to rewrite the history of World War II. The outlines of an American Hitler myth were visible. Laski, a Jew, wrote that Christianity and capitalism were finished; White, another Jew, admired him and tried to ruin our main bulwark against Bolshevism. Der Fuehrer was the victim of a plot. The committee seemed to have contacted Goebbels on its ouija board. One document, a translation from an article in *War and the Working Class* in Moscow showed that at Bretton Woods White was passionate about beating the Russians at volley ball!

THAT SAME NIGHT on the Ed Murrow program, Laski came up again when McCarthy "revealed" that Laski dedicated one of his books to Murrow. If Laski were not dead, there would be a demand for his extradition. This is the mood of our Mad Hatter Congress.

I. F. Stone Speaks on the Witch Hunt

In Los Angeles, at Embassy Auditorium, Ninth and Grand, April 22, 8:15 p.m.

In San Francisco, at California Hall, Polk and Turk Streets, April 23, 8 p.m.

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News and Comment of the Week

Stephen Mitchell Imitates Pontius Pilate

"On the other hand," Democratic National Chairman Stephen A. Mitchell wrote to California National Committeeman Paul Ziffren last week, "serious and continuing charges concerning the loyalty or reliability of a Democratic candidate for Congress must be dealt with as real problems of our political life." Mr. Mitchell's recipe for dealing with real problems seems to be to run away from them.

In making public a letter refusing aid to Congressman Robert L. Condon, a California Democrat, in his campaign for reelection, Mr. Mitchell sets up the premise that a man is to be considered guilty until he proves himself innocent. Condon was barred from an A-bomb test as a "security risk" last year on the basis of just the kind of false or trivial rubbish which figures in most loyalty proceedings. Condon denied under oath that he was a Communist but has never been given a chance to know or face his accusers.

How can Mitchell talk against McCarthyism and fail to face up to this typical witch hunt situation? The precedent can be most dangerous to the party. There are many occasions much less spectacular than A-bomb tests in which Congressmen obtain confidential information. Is the orbit of the loyalty purge to extend into Congress? Is the voter's choice to be subject to the veto of FBI investigation and clearance? And is the Democratic party under such cowardly leadership that it will not defend the right of an accused Congressman even to a fair hearing in which he can confront his accusers? These are the real issues and we hope that California voters will turn in a more manly answer on them than has Mr. Mitchell.

One Way to Frighten Juries

In Remmer v. U. S. decided March 8, the Supreme Court reversed a conviction for evasion of income taxes because unbeknownst to the defendant the FBI had investigated the jury while the trial was on. "A juror," the court held, "must feel free to exercise his functions without the FBI or anyone else looking over his shoulder." The FBI questioned three jurors during the trial of Ben Gold of the Fur Workers on Taft-Hartley oath charges without the knowledge of the defense. Other jurors were also told of the FBI inquiries. Five members of the jury were government employes, easily susceptible to intimidation. Two jurors were dismissed but a mistrial was denied. Gold was found guilty of being a member and of supporting the Communist party at the time he took his T-H oath.

It is difficult enough for a radical to get a fair trial in the District of Columbia before a jury on which government employes serve. It will become impossible if the Department of Justice and the FBI are encouraged by the complaisance of the courts to go around interrogating jurors on one excuse or another while they are trying a case. The excuse in the Gold case was thin and we hope it will be aired on appeal. When it is remembered that most of the witnesses were ex-Communists now employed by the Department of Justice as professional informers, one can see the extent to which the cards are stacked against the defendant in cases of this kind.

Right to Counsel Strengthened

The Supreme Court struck a blow in favor of the fast disappearing right to counsel when it reversed the disbarment of Harry Sacher for contempt in the first Foley Square Smith Act trials. The judges ruled 6-2 that in view of Sacher's record "permanent disbarment in this case is unnecessarily severe" and remanded it to the lower courts where a temporary suspension order is thus indicated. Pending before the court is a petition for rehearing in the case of Abraham J. Isserman, the other Foley Square trial counsel who was disbarred in the wake of a contempt citation by Judge Harold S. Medina. The severity visited on these defenders of Communists contrasts with the public treatment of Judge Medina who spent $75,000 of his own money defending the rights of Nazi collaborators in the Cramer treason case during the last war without creating a ripple of disapproval.

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